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troversy on this point has now lasted three centuries, as he says, and will to my mind last many centuries longer, so long in fact as "historians of a later age" will continue to consult their own convenience and not take the trouble to look for materials of evidence in the proper quarter. To settle the point I have ransacked Hungarian sources and at the beginning of 1890 contributed a short series of articles to the London *Notes and Queries* (7th Ser., Vol. IX.) in which I adduced more than ample evidence to prove that Captain Smith's exploits in Hungary, Transylvania, Wallachia and Moldavia as related by himself in the *True Travels and Adventures* are a worthless pseudo-historical romance, and that the bogus grant of arms to Smith by the Prince of Transylvania is a clumsy piece of forgery that could not possibly mislead any one possessing more than a superficial knowledge of Hungarian history. I communicated the verbatim text of this precious document to the Hungarian Heraldical Society about the same time, and it was read at one of their meetings and received with peals of derisive laughter by the historians present. There never was and never will be any controversy in Hungary about the veracity of Captain Smith. The text of the document alone was sufficient to brand him as an impudent forger.

The articles in *Notes and Queries* have unfortunately escaped the notice of Captain Smith's latest biographer, in the English *Dictionary of National Biography*, and therefore it is not to be wondered at that they have remained unknown to Professor Fiske in far Massachusetts. Consequently, as I said, ink will continue to flow and "the smoke of the conflict" will continue "to hover about the field." Had Professor Fiske read my contribution to the controversy he would have penned Chapter III. of his *Old Virginia and her Neighbors* in a totally different frame of mind, no doubt, and inevitably come to the conclusion that "the staggering blow between the eyes" of which he writes was the one that gravelled the Virginian Ananias and not the "flippant critics" who laugh at his rodomontades.

LEWIS L. KROPP.

LONDON, 16 May, 1898.

Colonial Mobile. By PETER J. HAMILTON, A.M. (Boston and New York: Houghton, Mifflin and Co. 1897. Pp. xxii, 446.)

THE vast region, draining from the Tennessee watershed to the Gulf, and here first characterized as the Alabama-Tombigbee Basin, rich in natural features and historic interest, finds in this volume an exhaustive and appreciative presentation of its history. While the work is called *Colonial Mobile*, it concerns not alone the town of that name, but the settlement and expansion of population in the whole basin, while under the rule of foreign powers, and during the early years of American control. The period covered, 1519-1821, is divided into six parts, with an appendix of documents and collateral matter. Within these three centuries come the discovery and exploration by the Spanish, 1519-1670; the set-

tlement and growth of the French, 1670-1763; the domination of the British, 1763-1780; and the occupation of the Spanish, 1780-1813. In none of the general histories of Louisiana, Mississippi, Florida, or Alabama, indeed in no work, has emphasis been placed on the fact that the Mobile Basin has been the centre of an important influence and history from the early explorations of the sixteenth down to the present century. Failing to appreciate this importance the treatment of its history has heretofore been subordinate and meagre. The author finds the explanation in the fact that "Spain, France and England lost the territory so long ago as to have lost likewise interest in its history. It has, too, so long been severed from the Mississippi valley, which was colonized from its shores, that the historians of modern Louisiana have known personally but little of this the original seat of that great empire, and have devoted their attention mainly to the later growth which centered on the lower Mississippi."

Coming therefore to a consideration of the history of the area included in his subject, the author views it as a distinct field of influence and activity, and duly emphasizes its larger historical aspects. The result is a work of more than local interest. The early explorations are reviewed, and confirmatory evidences are presented which show the correctness of Dr. Scaife's identification of the Spanish Rio del Espiritu Santo with Mobile River and Bay. Then comes the making clear the fact that for about twenty years under the French the town of Mobile was not only a colony but distinctively the French capital of Louisiana—the Mississippi Valley—and that afterwards it was still more than a settlement, although not the capital, for it was the head of the Department of Mobile, and the chief seat south of Canada of French influence among the Indians. After the English had become the conquerors, it was important for its touch with the Indians, and through Bayou Manchac for its control of the English half of the Mississippi valley. During the Spanish period, which is more local, the running of Ellicott's line and the Louisiana purchase again bring the section into the current of broad history. Under the Americans the Creek War and the Bay engagements are among the brilliant events in the annals of the Union.

The purely local annals are given in considerable fulness. The beginnings of settlements, local exploration, the establishments of forts and trade relations with the Indians and all the detail of intercourse with them, the lives of the people and of their immediate rulers, the relations of the colonists to those of the adjacent powers, are all noted in graphic form. Appropriately interwoven with the general narrative are sketches of the leading characters. As a town chronicle the book is one of great value, giving full details as to early settlers, names of persons and places, government, etc. It has definitely located the first French Mobile, and fixed the site of old Fort Charlotte. There is a careful study of all the old land grants.

The execution of the work evinces an earnest enthusiasm and painstaking care which only the student of modern historical method can ap-

preciate. It is not in any sense a mere expansion or an enlargement in the treatment of old facts. Making clear the distinctive character of his theme, the author has recast the whole treatment. This, together with the wealth of additional material introduced, gives to the work the first place as authority. It is in a sense hardly fair to make such a comparison, but it is interesting to note that Pickett, the leading historian of the period, gives but one chapter to British control, while Hamilton gives nine; Pickett dismisses the later Spanish occupation in one chapter, with nothing of their local history, while Hamilton devotes eleven chapters to the same subject. The usual authorities have been freely used, and often with new interpretation. The search for new material seems to have been exhaustive. The author spared neither pains nor expense in securing all that was to be found that would contribute in the most remote way to the elucidation of his theme. The whole of the local field has been personally explored by him. Among the new authorities never before used, and which are cited, are the records of the Catholic Church at Mobile from 1704, the papers of General Haldimand, papers from the British colonial office, the *American State Papers* the departmental archives of the United States, the local land, court, and municipal records, the files of the *Mobile Register* and other newspapers, together with numerous old letters and unpublished memoirs. The illustrations, with few exceptions all new, include many rare and hitherto unknown early maps, which add greatly to the value and completeness of the book. All in all the work is one of superior merit, and must hold a permanent place in our historical literature.

THOMAS McADORY OWEN.

Select Documents illustrative of the History of the United States from 1776 to 1861, edited with notes by WILLIAM MACDONALD, Professor of History and Political Science in Bowdoin College. (New York: The Macmillan Co. 1898. Pp. xiii, 465.)

THE first document is the Declaration of Independence and the last one is the Constitution of the Confederate States. The whole number is ninety-seven, and they are arranged in chronological order. Accompanying each document or related group there is a paragraph of explanatory matter, bibliographical references to the sources of the selections and collateral references to other works. It is the aim of the author to utilize the space of a single volume of convenient size for presenting "such documents as any one pretending even to an elementary acquaintance with the history of the United States may fairly be expected to know." While not rare or new, many of the selections are not conveniently accessible to the ordinary student. Seventeen of the precious pages are occupied with the Constitution of the United States, a document so accessible that it might have been omitted from the collection except that the book is designed to be used as a student's manual in company with lectures or a narrative text, and reference to the Constitution would be frequent.